

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT  
PUBLIC SESSION  
MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2012  
7:00P.M.**

**1. OPENING**

**1.1.1 Call to Order**

Council President Porter called the meeting to order at 7: 05p.m.

**1.1.2 Roll Call**

Present: Mayor Eugene Grant (Late Arrival 7:15pm), Councilmember Darrell Hardy, Councilmember Johnie L. Higgs, Sr., Council President Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald R. Raynor, Sr., Councilmember Elenora Simms, Councilmember Aretha Stephenson (excused absence), Councilmember Reveral Yeargin

Staff: Robert Ashton, City Treasurer, Vincent Jones, City Administrator, Samuel Prue, Chief of Police, Johnny Thompson, Director of Public Works

**1.1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:**

The invocation was given by Councilmember Yeargin

**1.1.4. Approval of Agenda**

Councilmember Simms requested Agenda item 3.3. Resolution R-12-15 Approval of job Descriptions for the City Government be removed from the agenda and discussed in a special meeting. It was motion to approve the agenda with correction by Councilmember Hardy and seconded by Councilman Yeargin. The motion carried.

**1.1.5. Approval of February and March Meeting Minutes**

- It was motioned by Councilmember Yeargin and seconded by Councilmember Raynor to approve the Regular Work Session meeting minutes for Monday, February 6, 2012. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Yeargin and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Council Vacancy Public Hearing meeting minutes for Monday, February 6, 2012. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.

- It was motioned by Councilmember Yeargin and seconded by Councilmember Hardy to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Monday, February 6, 2012. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Yeargin and seconded by Councilmember Raynor to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Monday, February 13, 2012. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Yeargin and second by Councilmember Hardy to approve Regular Work Session meeting minutes for Tuesday, March 6, 2012. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Raynor to approve the Public Session meeting minutes for Monday, March 12, 2012. The motioned carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Yeargin and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Closed Session Meeting Minutes for March 19, 2012. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved
- Councilmember Yeargin reported that Pepco came by to check the installed Smart meters in his court and reported they were working good.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Raynor and seconded by Councilmember Hardy to approve the Special Session Meeting minutes for Monday, March 19, 2012. The motion carried. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.
- Councilmember Porter stated that minutes will need to be given to the Council a week in advance from today forward.

## **2. PRESENTATIONS:**

- N/A

## **3. LEGISLATION**

- 3.1. Ordinance O-12-12 Amendment of the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading  
Motion – Councilmember Raynor. Seconded – Councilmember Simms. Unanimous.
- 3.2. Ordinance O-12-13 FY 2011-2011 Budget Amendment 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading  
Motion – Councilmember Higgs. Seconded - Councilmember Hardy. Unanimous

- In keeping with the city's goal of going green it will be the council's goal to cut down significantly on the amount of paper generated by the meeting materials and documents.
- 3.3. Resolution R-12-15 Approval of Job Descriptions for the City Government  
Removed from the agenda by a motion (see 1.1.4.)

#### **4. REPORTS**

##### **4.1. Mayor's Report:**

- The proposed FY 2013 City budget has been submitted to the Council
- It reflects a 16.4% decrease in property tax revenues from the FY 2012.
- The priorities in the FY 2013 Budget will be 1. Better management of city resources 2. Enhance our public safety efforts to reduce crime and improve the perception of the community. 3. Improve educational outcomes by partnering with local schools. 4. Increase the focus on economic development to attract quality businesses to the city. 5. Promote Seat Pleasant as a green community. 6. Strengthen city programs that will educate the community.
- He reported there will be an 8.5% decrease in the city's General fund Budget.
- He informed citizens that for a nominal fee they could receive a copy of the proposed budget and citizens could go online to view the proposed budget as well.
- The Mayor went over several proposed projects for the FY 2013 budget.
- The Mayor thanked the City Administrator, Treasurer and Department Heads for their efforts in completing the proposed FY 2013 budget. He informed the citizens that Department Heads were given the arduous task of reducing their proposed budgets by 10%.
- He informed the citizens of the public hearing on the Feggans Center next week and that their input is important and nothing they will see is etched in stone.
- He went over the process that will take place in moving the Feggans Center project forward. A draft RFP will be presented on Thursday. Then it will go to the papers on the following Tuesday. After the 21 day solicitation period a vendor will be chosen and their proposal reviewed by the City Attorney. The developer will give their presentation to the City Council for a decision that should be made by June. Afterward negotiations will begin with the chosen developer.

- He added that all monies for the Feggans Center Project must be invested. There will be no taxpayer money used.
- He added he would like to have Blaylock do a cost analysis.
- He added an assemblage of property issues will be worked out with the City Attorney to acquire properties.
- The city will be working at the County and State levels to promote leverage for this project.
- Councilman Yeargin asked would there be any senior housing in the new Feggans Center. Mayor stated there will be one (1) unit in each of the four buildings dedicated to senior housing. He wants to give back to the seniors by giving them an opportunity to age in place.
- Councilman Yeargin asked how this may affect the activity center. Mayor responded that he would like to place the community center at the new Feggans Center and make the activity center a senior center.
- Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, on behalf of the City he attended the funeral of the only daughter of Vivian Dobson, Former Mayor of Capitol Heights.
- Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, on behalf of the City he attended the funeral of Fairmount Heights High School student Brandon Wiggins. This young man was shot and killed on his way to school. Mr. Wiggins was signed up to be a student participant in this year's Health Summit.
- Councilmember Higgs commented that he took the idea of the Central Store to his manager and was met with a favorable response.
- Councilman Yeargin asked about senior housing in the proposed Feggans Center project.

#### **4.2. Kelly Porter, Council President Report:**

- Council President Porter stated that his monthly report is on the information stand.
- Council President Porter wants to keep the Fire Department on the forefront with citizens concerns as far as keeping the Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Station in the city.

#### **4.3 Kevin Brenner, Chief-Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department**

- Not present. No report submitted

#### **4.4. City Administrator – Vincent E. Jones**

- Employees will now have life insurance in the amount of \$25,000
- A Section 125 Cafeteria plan will also be instituted for employees which will save them money
- He thanked the staff for their help with the FY 2013 preparations

- The City now has its own email server and in order to get things straight the system might be down over the weekend
- Reported there will be a hearing on Cable negotiations on April 23, 2012 which will be after the FY2013 Budget
- Councilmember Yeargin asked about the pavement issue in front of the Jehovah Witness property. Mr. Jones stated that Seat Pleasant Dr. is owned by the county and in talking to them about the crossroad he was informed that a MUTCD requirement has to be met. Mr. Thompson will be following up on this.

#### **4.5. Finance Department- Robert Ashton, Treasurer**

- Announced that the Finance Department will be keeping in line with the City's goal of going green in the near future instituting electronic payments of personal property tax. The State will be electronically invoicing the city and then the city will electronically invoice the citizen.
- He reported that personal property tax makes up \$1.1 million of the city's budget which computes to 31%.
- He reported that along with the Home Tax Credit Program citizens who rent can take advantage of the Renters' Tax Credit Program as well.

#### **4.6. Police Department – Samuel Prue, Chief of Police**

- He is researching computer systems to identify what would be the best for the department.
- Officer Lowery attended gang training. As far as Chief Prue knows there is currently no gang activity in the city but he just wants to be prepared.
- On April 21, 2012 there will be a police awards program. Officer Matthews will be receiving Officer of the Year and Officer Busby will be receiving Community Service Officer of the Year.
- He reported the Code Enforcers have been unable to fully do activities due to the lack of a vehicle. Their old car needs a transmission. The total cost to put the car on the street would be \$4900. It is a 99 Ford Taurus with over 100,000 on it.
- Council President Porter asked will there be an effort to scrap the old vehicle. Mayor stated this information will be in the Public Safety Committee report.
- Council President Porter stated fleet issues will be part of the Public Safety Committee discussions

- Chief Prue stated 50 violations were written and 4 court cases were won so far.
- Councilmember Raynor asked if the neighborhood issues are not gang related are they drug related. He stated that Seat Pleasant Park was referred to as a “water” (PCP) park. Chief Prue has been patrolling that park with the county.
- Chief Prue stated that every 2 hours an officer has to sit at the park for 15 minutes.
- Council member Raynor suggested the gate be locked to give more control and if it was found to be unlocked then the chief could be notified to contact the County. Mayor Grant stated this would lock the Seat Pleasant police out. Councilmember Raynor retracted his suggestion.
- Mayor Grant has met with Park & Planning to request increased lighting in the park and he is also working with the county for an agreement to increase patrolling in that area. He wants Park & Planning to work jointly with our Public Works crew to clear debris thus opening up the park making it easier to see through the park.
- Mayor Grant stated that attendance at the Park & Planning budget hearings this year need to be by elected officials as well as citizens to push for the additional lighting needed for the park.
- Council President Porter encouraged citizens to use the park more so that Park & Planning could see that it is not empty all the time. He suggested a skateboard theme park, picnics and walking.
- Councilmember Simms asked was there a reserve officer on board.
- Chief Prue stated he would be bringing one on but not right now.
- Councilmember Hardy asked do we still pay \$1.00 for training each officer. Chief Prue stated it's an annual cost of \$40, but it is no longer \$1.00.
- Mrs. Evans stated there are tree and limbs laying around in the yard of the neighbor behind her and she would like to have someone talk with her neighbor because she does not want to get involved.
- Councilmember Raynor stated at a later time efforts need to be made to cut back the grass and bushes in the backs of the vacant properties by the Seat Pleasant park because gambling is going on in the yards
- Councilmember Yeargin asked about Sadie the dog. Chief Prue stated the dog was fine. He updated everyone on the marijuana bust. He stated the guy was out of jail and is now pending a trial. He added that the guy who was busted was not the registered owner of the house. He stated that at the time of the marijuana bust the police were there for something else.

- A citizen asked is there a company that can cut and clean up trees. Mayor stated the company that the city uses is very reasonable.
- Council President Porter asked of citizens to bring their concern to the council's attention ahead of time so it will give them more time to prepare a response.
- Mayor Grant mentioned that citizens could also use the city's website for their concerns as well.

#### **4.7. Public Works Department- Johnny Thompson, Director of Public Works**

- He stated he is working on the Lighting RFP
- He stated the Public Works Committee met to discuss obtaining communication radios
- He reported that street sweeper signs are to be posted to help with citizen awareness. Right now the sweeping schedule is conflicting but he is working on that.
- Council President Porter reported that the annual city clean up will be coming soon.
- Councilmember Yeargin asked Mr. Thompson about getting a sidewalk on Seat Pleasant Dr. by the bridge. Mr. Thompson stated that would require extensive work, which would involve a retaining wall. Also it would require a design phase and a large amount of funding. Also the cable wires would have to be moved.
- Mrs. Evans thanked Mr. Thompsons for sending someone to her home to help with clearing stuff from her property.

#### **5. CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

- Elmer Mims, 7227 G St., Seat Pleasant, MD 20743, Ward IV. 1. He is having an issue with the Gazette newspapers being distributed and left on property aprons. He suggested that the newspapers be placed in a box for citizens to pick up. 2. He wanted to know what happened to the city's activity of placing door hangers and signs regarding fines/ticket information for code violations.
- Wilhelmina Evans, 617 64<sup>th</sup> Ave., Seat Pleasant, MD 20743, Ward II 1. She brought forth a word from the Bible for the Mayor and Council from Philippians 1:6, "...He who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ". She added our city elected officials should be confident in Him.

- Councilmember Porter thanked Ms. Evans because you never know who made need to hear the Word.
- Samuel Dunston, 720 Birchleaf Ave., Seat Pleasant, MD 20743, Ward III. Wanted to let the Council know that drug traffic is non-stop in and around the park and on Birchleaf Ave. Park Police are not patrolling as much as the city thinks they are.
- Mayor instructed Chief to meet with Mr. Dunston and provide a report within thirty (30) days.
- Porter stated the type of communications from citizens is what the Council needs and that even though this happens all over, citizens should fight the fight in their individual communities.

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**6.1 None**

## **7. NEW BUSINESS:**

**7.1. None**

## **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 8.1. 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Autism Awareness Conference, Saturday, April 14, 2012, Seat Pleasant Elementary School, 6411 G Street, Seat Pleasant, MD 20743 from 8:00am-3:00pm Please register by going to [www.tinyurl.com/seatpleasant](http://www.tinyurl.com/seatpleasant)
- 8.2. Feggans Center Redevelopment Public Hearing, Monday, April 16, 2012, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 6:00pm
- 8.3. FY2013 Budget Public Hearing, Monday, April 23, 2012, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers, at 6:00pm
- 8.4. Ward II Crime Prevention Training, Wednesday, April 25, 2012, Pleasant Homes Community Center, 6810 Greig St., Seat Pleasant, MD from 6:00pm-8:00pm

## **9. ADJOURN-** The meeting was adjourned at 8:40p.m.

Submitted by,



Kyrthlyn J. Rhoda  
Administrative Assistant  
(In absence of City Clerk)